



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A PLAY FESTIVAL BY THE SEVENTH GRADE

MICHAELA CARROLL
New Paltz, N. Y.

The following paper is a report of a play festival held by the seventh grade of the New Paltz Training School in June, 1907. The subject is treated from its original beginnings, and embraces the following points of view: (1) The historical basis and the scheme pursued in imparting the instruction; (2) The manner in which the play was organized; (3) The general scheme in the preparation for the play; (4) The explanation of the play's phases: (a) the tableaux; (b) the crusade in the streets.

. . . . The true old times
When every morning brought a noble chance
And every chance brought out a noble knight.

Before a man can derive the full benefit from his own period and thereby contribute worthily to the future, he must realize by what struggles his predecessors purchased the privileges which he now enjoys. This retrospect should be taken early in life when the imagination is keen. The child should live through the trials and triumphs of his race. He should unconsciously measure himself with his hero brothers of the past. Thus a closer relation will be established between him and his fellow-men.

In accordance with the above ideas, the seventh grade of the New Paltz State Normal School studied the history of the Crusades. To give the children an idea of the magnitude of the Crusaders' inconvenience and perseverance, a few lessons were given on the geography, physiography, and history of Palestine. The children reviewed their Bible history from the time of Abraham, through the life of the Israelites in Egypt, up to the time of the Crusades.

Throughout the work the children were encouraged to make their own inferences, and to discover an effect from a cause. The following reason for the establishment of government among the

Israelites, given by a child of twelve, is a good example. He said that when the Israelites were shepherds, in order to obtain good grazing land, they were obliged to travel from place to place, and therefore the people became scattered. When they undertook agriculture, they became localized where they tilled their soil, and formed groups, and later as the groups felt the need of a leader and laws, they originated a simple form of government. In every case the teacher was especially careful to make each child feel that his influence was valuable. A series of lessons on the life of Mohammed was presented, and, so far as explanation was legitimate, the Mohammedan religion was explained.

In dealing with the Saracen apart from his religion, emphasis was laid upon his customs, occupations, inventions, conquests, his contributions to the world, and his character. The spirit of adverse criticism was avoided as much as possible. The children were led to realize their indebtedness to all peoples of the past, thus reducing their deficiencies to minor importance.

During the study of the Saracens' conquests and life in Morocco and Spain, an opportunity was afforded to give the children a glance at the Alhambra, its use, its architecture, its ruin, and its importance today. At this point the Mohammedans were left for a time and attention was given to pilgrims and pilgrimages, beginning with the origin of pilgrimages, and continuing through the various phases of the subject up to the pilgrim's burial.

To establish an appreciation for the significance of events which prefaced the Crusades, it was necessary to give a few lessons on the conditions in various countries and on the relation of countries to one another. In this connection, the Greek Empire was studied as to its power as a nation, its ruler, its capital, and the importance of the location of the latter to Europe. From the last point, the children were able to infer the result to Europe of the possible fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Saracens, and likewise to understand why the Saracens were eager to seize the city.

The latter point introduced the subject of the Crusades. Three Crusades were studied in detail and one in general.

In studying a Crusade, the specific causes were discovered first which included the study of councils held by the pope and by monks. Then followed the social and military nature and incidents of the army, including the battles fought (with their causes, events, and results) which battles were turning-points, classification of the Crusade as successful or unsuccessful and why, and the results of the Crusade to Europe, to the world then, and to the world today. In following the different leaders through a Crusade, an excellent opportunity to compare courage with cowardice and wisdom with ignorance was afforded, but comparisons were made by the children almost unconsciously.

The last step in the sequence of work was the summing-up of the results of the particular Crusade in order to find out the general results to the world. The general results were classified as (1) agricultural; (2) social; (3) military; (4) commercial; (5) intellectual; (6) political.

As exercises the children wrote essays, made outlines of work, and made maps, marking the routes followed by the various crusading expeditions.

THE PLAY FESTIVAL

At the end of the year, the children were eager to give an exhibit of their work. They decided upon a series of tableaux which should represent the sequence of their work by depicting the decisive events in the history of the Crusades. The tableaux were to be preceded by a street pageant. The selection and assignment of the characters that should appear were made by the class. This phase of the work was very interesting because of the manner in which the children ignored the personal element.

The character of the festival necessitated considerable hand-work, which called upon the children's knowledge of manual training, sewing, and art, as well as history.

After the tableaux and pageant had been arranged, the problem of costuming was considered. It was thought best to keep the attire very simple and merely suggestive of mediaeval costumes. The children made and helped make their paraphernalia. During one period, two boys came into the assembly where the

teacher was arranging material, and, securing a needle and thread, they sewed yards of cheesecloth together, on which their scenery was to be painted. The armor was made of gray cambric painted to represent link armor.

Before making their shields, the children studied the history of the cross and various styles of shields, drawing the different forms. From their drawings they selected the shield and cross which they preferred. Having arranged the cross in an appropriate design on the shield, they worked out the color scheme, adhering to the idea of complementary pairs, which was one phase of the color theory studied in the grade. With their small shields as models, they made their large ones of pasteboard in the Manual-Training Department. These were brought to the art class and decorated according to the small patterns.

Pennants were next worked out very much as were the shields, except that they were made entirely in the art and history periods. The sail for the boat which should appear in the parade was constructed in the Manual-Training Department under the direction of the History Department. The boat was a real row-boat placed on a wagon, and draped with orange and green cheesecloth to match the sail.

The horse trappings were very simple. They consisted of a blanket and a sash tied with long ends in front, all of which corresponded in color with the cross on the rider's breast.

Each participant, except the monks and pilgrims, carried a spear or a pennant and a shield.

All the costuming and dramatization were done in one week. Only two of the rehearsals were in costume. At the first rehearsal, conditions seemed to point to failure. The next rehearsal looked more promising, and by the third, the children had lost all self-consciousness and entered fully into the spirit of the work. Each child had his individual opinion regarding the attitude he should assume. Some would kneel and lean forward as though eager to listen to Peter and Urban; some looked down in sorrow; some assumed an expression of joy. They all entered into the spirit of the time. Of course some required more time than others to forget themselves, but all seemed eager to make the affair a success.

THE MARCH

The pageant was called "An Original Crusade," because not only one Crusade was depicted; but it showed a typical crusading army on its way to the Holy Land, the stations in life from which Crusaders and pilgrims came, their method of travel, the leaders of various expeditions, the nations which contributed most toward the movement, the instigators of the wars, and the Christians' opponent, the Saracen.

The underlying spirit of the Crusade is perhaps best expressed in the motto, "Live pure lives, think pure thoughts, right wrongs." In order to emphasize the Crusade idea, the characters were arranged so as to form a cross (see illustration). Here the sequence of work was still maintained. The Saracen, or the one who made war necessary, was the foremost figure; a typical French and a typical German Crusader (the Saracens' two greatest opponents) followed, carrying a white banner bearing the motto, *Deus vult! Deus vult!* Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard, being the two who did most to arouse the people's enthusiasm, followed, the latter on horseback; the four leaders of the first Crusade were on horseback and spaced so as to form the horizontal limb of the cross; in their rear were Conrad III and Louis VII, the leaders of the second Crusade; next came a typical pilgrim and Frederick Barbarossa of the third Crusade; Richard I and Philip II followed on horseback, and last came the boat in which were Crusaders and pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land.

At an appointed hour, the children assembled at the Town Hall and put on their costumes; then they organized their line of march and paraded the streets of the village, returning to the hall. As soon as the children had rested, they formed in single file, and, led by Pope Urban, entered the auditorium, singing the Crusaders' hymn, in which the rest of the school joined. Thus the procession slowly marched to the stage at the opposite side of the auditorium, where the players took their places behind the curtain at the rear of the stage, ready to present the tableaux which followed.



"AN ORIGINAL CRUSADE"

THE TABLEAUX

1. Saracen conducting a merchant's quarter or bazaar.
2. Peter the Hermit addressing his wayside audience.
3. Urban conducting the Council of Clermont.
4. The four leaders of the first Crusade.
5. Saint Bernard and followers at Vezelay.
6. Philip II, Richard I, and Frederick Barbarossa with followers.
7. All Crusaders singing the "Pilgrims' Chorus."

In order that the tableaux should be better understood by the audience, the children advised having some explanation of each scene. Therefore pupils were selected to introduce and explain each tableaux.

Inasmuch as the Saracen through his threatening attitude toward Constantinople was really the one who caused the first Crusade to be organized, he was given the first place. In order that he might be shown in a purely Saracenic environment, he was represented as the keeper of a bazaar, sitting huddled up among his wares counting his coins. Back of him and back of all the succeeding scenes, was a large screen, painted by the teacher, which showed the towers of Jerusalem just above a hill, surrounded by trees. This was done in order to emphasize the fact that through all the struggle, the recovery of the Holy City was uppermost in the Crusaders' hearts. The thought of Jerusalem was back of all they did or anticipated doing.

Scene 2 showed the first man who made an attempt to arouse the world to the true state of affairs in the East. Just before the curtain was dropped, Peter raised his hand and repeated the passage from Eph. 6:10-17.

Scene 3 enabled the class to show the great sympathy shown by Pope Urban, and the means by which he transmitted his wonderful enthusiasm to his hearers in the Council of Clermont. Suddenly, some knelt and the others stood upright and exclaimed, *Deus vult! Deus vult!* Thus was shown the transition from the pilgrim spirit to that of the Crusader. Then Urban raised his arms and said, "This day has been fulfilled in your midst, the

saying of our Lord, 'Where two or three are gathered together in thy name, there am I in the midst of them.'"

Scene 4 was purely a tableau; the four leaders stood in front with their followers grouped back of them. This scene showed that the pope's efforts had been of some avail.

Scene 5 showed the great preacher of the second Crusade at his famous Council of Vezelay, with the two rulers who were influenced by him to enter upon the Crusade.

Scene 6 represented the three leaders of the third Crusade with their followers.

The exhibit would not fulfil its purpose if closed by the last tableau, therefore three children were chosen to state the results of the Crusade to the world at large, thus making the audience realize the meaning of the study.

After results had been given, all the characters appeared and sang the "Pilgrim's Chorus," in which intermediate pupils and normal students joined.